

The Rambler



Official Publication of

THE WASATCH MOUNTAIN CLUB

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TRIP SCHEDULE
March 1961

Last month snow conditions punched holes in our schedule for cross country tours. The following scheduled tours will be conducted if conditions are safe. Again, we request trip leaders to supply Club Headquarters with the last minute details on the trips.

- March 5 Superior Lake Blanch Ski Tour. Bring climbers. Lunch. Register by 6:00 p.m. Friday night, March 3. EM 3-7150.
- March 11, 12 Open. We have plans in the making. Will let you know later.
- March 19 Gad Valley Ski Tour. Re-scheduled. The previous time it was cancelled because of hazardous snow conditions. Bring climbers. Lunch. Register by 6:00 p.m., Friday, March 17. EM 3-7150.
After ski social at the Harold Goodro's, 2350 East 4800 South.
- March 26 Alta-Brighton-Alta Ski Tour. Another re-schedule for the usual reason. Snow conditions cancelled the other tour. Bring climbers. Lunch. Register by 6:00 p.m. Friday, March 24.
- April 1 Nominations Dinner Dance. Save this date for a delightful evening at Log Haven, up romantic Millcreek Canyon. \$3.25 per person which will cover tips, tax, mixers, and lots of dancing. Notice will be out later for more details.
- April 2 Ski where you wish but come to the after-ski social at Burr Lee's. 7300 So. 2870 East.

TRIPS AND OUTINGS

February Frolic

Nearly everyone was there. The leader? - - the best. We met, every blooming skier among us, bright and early under a dazzling blue sky. The climb to the top of the mountains was easily accomplished as we were all in top form. The leisurely run down through the billowing powder was exhilarating. We skimmed over the snow and swished to a stop at the Lodge door. Some of our expert cooks had been industriously preparing a feast and the tables were laden with steaming goodies. The crackling fire beckoned everyone around the fireplace and the hearty doings of the day were relived with relish. Are you sorry you missed this trip? Well, it really has not taken place yet. But wouldn't it be fun if the slopes were open to touring, the powder was deep and unbroken, and the Lodge was open with dinner on the table? Besides all this, we say with some wistfulness, it could happen.

Enough for the day dreaming! As you know by now our cross country tours were cancelled because of avalanche danger and we don't have anything to talk about in this column. No one knows better about the realistic danger of a sudden snow slide than our prexy Cal Giddings who saw Jen swallowed up before his eyes. However, she came out unhurt and the story has a happy ending.

After-Ski Socials

John and Maxine MacDuff hosted a real sing along. Clustered around the table full of goodies members of the group compared anecdotes of happenings on the hill. Then, John popped that record on the player and we were off to some way out warbling.

Cal and Jen Giddings were interrupted by telephone calls during the evening as lost skiers called in for directions, but everyone finally found the Giddings country estate. We listened entranced as Jen told about her experience with the snow slide. The barbecued burgers were delicious and second helpings were the rule rather than the exception.

CONSERVATION

by Austin Wahraftig

The new Conservation Committee of the WMC held its first meeting on February 13, 1961. The primary purpose of the meeting was to have a general preliminary discussion to determine where we should first concentrate our efforts. Our National Parks are in danger; our mountains are overgrazed; no adequate plans exist for providing wilderness areas for our future population. These problems are far too many for this committee to attack generally. But we can hope to have some influence on the particular problems that we work on strongly. We hope members and friends of the WMC will help by writing to the appropriate public officials, stating their opinions on these conservation matters.

Carl Bauer, who for many years was the only representative of conservation matters, presented several of the problems existing in our local canyon areas. We hope to have a general membership meeting where these problems can be discussed.

In view of the need for action during the present State Legislative session, Charlie Hall, by authorization of the committee, has written to Governor Clyde and members of the Legislature favoring the establishment of the Wasatch State Park. A large amount of effort has gone into obtaining options on the land required. If this land is not obtained now, it will in all probability, be available only at a far higher, a prohibitive, price in the future. There has been much comment on the need for a Great Salt Lake Park. No doubt, the need exists, but there seems to be little chance that the land along the lake shore will be subdivided into summer cabin and tavern sites in the near future. There is immediate need to establish parks in the mountains while land is still available in large areas at reasonable cost.

A second action taken was to approve the general ideas expressed by Secretary of the Interior, Udall, concerning the Rainbow Bridge National Monument. If careful study indicates that the consequences of the construction necessary to keep Lake Powell out from under Rainbow Bridge are worse than

letting the lake intrude, the construction would be a mistake. The proposal to greatly enlarge the Monument (it is now tiny, only a square one-half mile on a side) to include the adjacent highly scenic canyon areas and keep the whole as a primitive area is an excellent one. We believe it is essential, however, that the area be administered as a National Park (or Monument) and NOT be "developed" as part of the Lake Powell recreational area.

CAINE'S COLUMN

by Caine Alder

"I thought I knew all there was to know about skiing until I saw Jim McConkey ski High Rustler yesterday. Now I feel as if I should forget all that I've ever learned and start at the beginning again." This was just one of many similar reactions to the unique style of Jim McConkey. I overheard the above quotation during the National Ski Clinic for instructors held at Alta during the spring of 1959.

The number of McConkey admirers has always been large. To attempt a verbal description of the skiing ability of Jim McConkey is a difficult thing to do. And to those who have seen "McConk" in his inimitable style ski Eagles's Nest, High Rustler, or the Baldy Chutes, know that a verbal description is a very unsatisfactory means of description.

Jim was born in Barrie, Ontario, Canada. He was six years old when he first put on an old pair of skis belonging to his brother. This was in 1932 when skiing hadn't really developed into the sport that it is today. Ski tows were hard to come by and Jim's early skiing was largely in the form of hunting rabbits, going to and from school, and regular practice on one of the local golf courses. This procedure continued for seven or eight years until in 1940, when Jim moved to Collingwood Ontario (35 miles from Barrie). Equipment was still pretty poor but at least there was a ski tow at Collingwood! Jim tells me that at this time telemark turns were in vogue. As far as bindings were concerned they were simply a leather toe strap.

In 1944 Jim went to the Hudson Bay Fur Trading Post in Northern Saskatchewan. He was employed as a clerk and stayed there for approximately six months, after which he moved back to Barrie to continue his schooling. While there he made frequent trips to Collingwood to ski and to instruct.

In December of '47 Jim traveled to Lac Beauport to attend a ski clinic which was headed by Luggi Foegur. McConk must have made quite an impression on Foegur, for he invited him to instruct in the Mt. Tremblant area. It was at this time that Jim narrowly escaped death while working on a ski film with Foegur. He fell into a crevasse on the tongue of the Athabaska Glacier and suffered several broken bones.

In 1948 Foegur took directorship of a ski school in Yosemite and invited McConk to come with him. Jim stayed there until 1951. From here Jim moved to Banff as manager of one of the local lifts.

In winter of '53 he taught at Gray Rocks, Canada, and frequently led people on ski tours through the Canadian Rockies. Finally, in the fall of 1953, Jim moved to Salt Lake and accepted the job of instructor under Alf Engen. According to McConk, outside of the Canadian Rockies, Alta offers the best terrain and snow that he has ever skied on. He also likes it because of its nearness to the city. This was to become an important factor to Jim for it was at about this time he went into the insurance business.

Jim's future plans include staying in the insurance business as a multiple lines agent and remaining active in skiing. Jim feels that we are very fortunate here to have such an excellent skiing area so close to our homes. I should also like to add that we are very fortunate to have a man like Jim with us.

NEWS NOTES

Bud Temple has added another trophy to his collection for the mantelpiece. Bud took the Hoover Cup Traveling trophy with the best time of 1:07.5. Hmmm!

Wonder if he would like to donate it to the Lodge.

Some of our fair members have been gracing Alta by working at the Sitzmark and at Watson Shelter. Mona Moeller, Janet Christensen, and Ginny Winkle have looked pert and efficient as they went about their business of tidying tables, working behind the counters, and in general being pleasant to the general skiing public.

New Member:

Ron Perla
1148 East 13th South
Salt Lake City 5
HU 5-0951

To all whose dues are delinquent - - please enjoy this last copy of the Rambler. Your subscription just expired.